

A new name for a subspecies of New World hawk

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Until recently, the phylogeny and systematics of birds of prey were based on morphological and behavioural traits (Stresemann & Amadon 1979, Wolters 1976, Amadon & Bull 1988, Thiollay 1994), which are often prone to convergence due to similarities in habitat use and prey spectra. With the development of molecular genetics and sophisticated statistical methods within the last two decades, it is now possible to study phylogenetic relationships within the Accipitridae more objectively, with the result that several recent molecular studies have revealed a far more complex picture of relationships at all taxonomic levels than hitherto supposed (Wink & Sauer-Gürth 2004, Helbig *et al.* 2005, Lerner & Mindell 2005, Kocum 2006, 2008, Griffiths *et al.* 2007, Haring *et al.* 2007). Many genera, as currently circumscribed (Stresemann & Amadon 1979, Sibley & Monroe 1990, Thiollay 1994, Ferguson-Lees & Christie 2001), do not form natural groups, but are of para- or even polyphyletic origin. This is especially true for the booted eagles and the buteonine hawks and kites, for which several taxonomic changes have been recommended or proposed (e.g. Riesing *et al.* 2003, Lerner & Mindell 2005, Clark & Schmitt 2006, Haring *et al.* 2007).

For more than a century, ten species of Neotropical buteonine hawks have usually been placed in the genus *Leucopternis* Kaup, 1847. Several phylogenetic studies, based on mitochondrial and nuclear markers, have convincingly shown that *Leucopternis* is highly polyphyletic (Lerner & Mindell 2005, Kocum 2006, Amaral *et al.* 2006, 2009, Lerner *et al.* 2008), forming six different clades that are not each others closest relatives. Amaral *et al.* (2009) erected new monotypic genera for two of the most aberrant species (now *Cryptoleucopteryx plumbeus* and *Amadonastur lacernulatus*), moved *L. schistaceus* to the genus *Buteogallus*, and resurrected the long-synonymized genera *Morphnarchus* Ridgway, 1920 (for *L. princeps*) and *Pseudastur* Blyth, 1850 (for *L. albicollis*, *L. occidentalis* and *L. polionotus*), leaving just *melanops* (the type species of *Leucopternis*), *kuhli* and *semiplumbeus* in *Leucopternis*. However, the latter six species (genera *Pseudastur* and *Leucopternis* of Amaral *et al.* 2009) are genetically nestled within *Buteo* and should, according to Kocum (2006) and Lerner *et al.* (2008), be included in that genus along with the monotypic genera *Asturina* and *Geranoaetus* (cf. Hellmayr & Conover 1949, Riesing *et al.* 2003, Lerner & Mindell 2005, Clark & Schmitt 2006, for supporting data) and, depending on the genus concept applied, also the more distantly related, likewise monophyletic *Rupornis*, *Percnohierax*, *Parabuteo* and *Morphnarchus*.

Accepting here the well-supported fusion of 'core' *Leucopternis* (including *melanops*, *kuhli* and *semiplumbeus*), *Pseudastur* (including *albicollis*, *occidentalis* and *polionotus*), *Asturina* and *Geranoaetus* with *Buteo*, following the above-mentioned studies, we have a three-fold homonymy concerning the name *costaricensis* in the newly circumscribed *Buteo*. The oldest name is *Buteo jamaicensis costaricensis* Ridgway, 1874. *Asturina nitida costaricensis* Swann, 1922, would become *Buteo nitidus costaricensis*, but that secondary homonym was already eliminated by Hellmayr & Conover (1949), who replaced it with *Buteo nitidus blakei*. The third name is *Leucopternis albicollis costaricensis* W. L. Sclater, 1919, for which, to my knowledge, no alternative name is available in synonymy if the species is moved to the genus *Buteo*. Accordingly I propose for it:

***Buteo albicollis delhoyoi*, nom. nov.**

Following Art. 72.7. of the Code (ICZN 1999), the new name takes the type of *Leucopternis griesbreghtii costaricensis* W. L. Sclater, 1919, under which name the taxon was originally described.

The new name honours the Spanish ornithologist Josep del Hoyo, initiator and editor of the monumental and magnificent *Handbook of the birds of the world*, for his outstanding contribution to bird conservation and ornithological science.

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